

New Century Scholar

Peter Koehn Named “New Century Scholar”

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Peter Koehn, Professor of Political Science at The University of Montana, is one of 12 U.S. *New Century Scholars* selected to receive \$40,000 research grants for 2001-2002 under the Fulbright “Challenges of Health in a Borderless World” program. A full description of the new Fulbright New Century Scholars program can be found at: www.cies.org. Others in the inaugural group of Fulbright NCS participants are from Harvard School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Boston U School of Medicine, Indiana University, U of Washington, Northwestern University, University of Colorado–Denver, and New Mexico University. Eighteen researchers from around the world also will participate. Those selected are senior academics and practitioners from Russia, Australia, Peru, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Thailand, India, Korea, Netherlands, Uganda, Cameroon, Mexico, Nepal, Indonesia, Hungary, South Africa, and China. The NCS group includes specialists trained in public health, epidemiology, family and community medicine, pediatrics, trauma recovery, demography, medical anthropology, microbiology, telemedicine, environmental health sciences, psychiatry, educational psychology, social psychology, Ayurvedic medicine, social welfare, law, mathematics, and political science. All 30 NCS participants will meet in Bellagio, Italy, at the end of October 2001. They also will be brought together again in Washington, D.C., after completing their research projects in late 2002. Koehn is especially eager to interact and possibly collaborate with his NCS colleagues, who will be exploring challenges to global health that range from anarchy and disease, the recovery of post-conflict societies, and global trade and public-health policies to the use of a new African form of Hip Hop culture called Kwaito in health-education programming among high-risk teens in urban South Africa, public-health challenges in Russia, the integration of traditional and orthodox systems in Nepal, smoking cessation in Korea, and the interplay of aging, poverty, and health among Mexican-origin people.

Koehn’s project builds on his mid 1980s Rockefeller Foundation-supported study of refugees living in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles. His new research project will focus on the interface of treatment outcomes with transnational competence among mainstream service providers and migrants from the Third World who approach health care in receiving countries from different cultural perspectives. Through increased understanding of skills and approaches that affect migrant satisfaction and compliance with healing and preventive-health recommendations, Koehn expects to contribute to the identification of innovative and effective strategies for strengthening transnational public health. “The tragic events of 11 September 2001 make cross-national and cross-disciplinary efforts to improve understanding and healing even more imperative today,” Koehn believes.

Koehn's research will be conducted next summer in Finland. He will be affiliated with the The University of Joensuu in Finland – thanks to a university-to-university relationship that Koehn initiated while he was UM's first Director of International Programs.

In part, he credits the success of his application, which builds on James N. Rosenau's pioneering work on the global skill revolution, to Rosenau's 1999 visit to the UM campus under the University's presidential lecture series and to the fortuitous opportunity his 2000/2001 sabbatical provided to work with Rosenau on refining their "transnational competence" framework. "Frankly," he adds, "I could not have conducted the extensive background research and writing/rewriting required to prepare a competitive proposal without the sabbatical."

The award gives Koehn a rare "Fulbright hat trick." He has now received Fulbright senior scholar awards to work in three continents: first in Africa (Nigeria), then in Asia (Hong Kong), and now in Europe.

Koehn looks forward to the initial conference of all NCS participants at the Bellagio Conference Center in Italy as an "incredible opportunity to learn from the exciting ideas and insights for improving global health that his colleagues will be sharing." He expects to be drawing extensively on what he learns at that meeting and over the next year in the courses he teaches at The University of Montana on *Development Administration* and on *Politics of Global Migration*.